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# ACID PRECIPITATION RESEARCH IN CANADA

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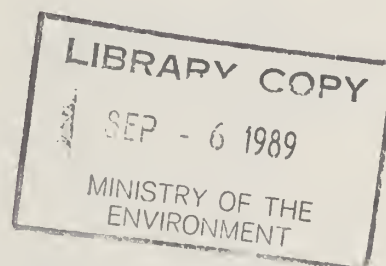
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ACID PRECIPITATION RESEARCH  
IN CANADA

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Dorset Research Centre



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## ABSTRACT

The deposition rate of strong acid in eastern Canada is similar to or greater than that documented in Norway and Sweden. Since the mid 1970's, Canadian provincial and federal agencies have been studying the effects of acid deposition on atmospheric processes and on terrestrial, and aquatic systems. Research results have consistently supported the Canadian position that reductions in sulphur dioxide emissions are needed across eastern North America to protect sensitive environments.





## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 History of the Acid Precipitation Problem in Canada

For several decades, Canadian scientists have been aware of the environmental damage to terrestrial and aquatic systems that can result from SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from point sources. In fact, the first reported case (Anon. 1941) was actually a transboundary pollution problem. Sulphur dioxide emissions from a smelter located in Trail, British Columbia caused environmental damage to areas across the border in the state of Washington (see Figure 1 for a map of Canada and its areas that are sensitive to acid deposition). This case set a legal precedent which will be discussed later in this Section.

The acidification of lakes in Canada was first described in the Province of Ontario in the Sudbury area in the early 1950's. Nickel and copper smelting operations began in the Sudbury geological basin in 1888. Smelter production increased throughout the 1930's, then again in the 1950's and the 1960's, resulting in continuous increases in the emissions of sulphur compounds and metals, especially copper and nickel. The INCO Limited smelter was, for many years, the world's single largest point source of SO<sub>2</sub> emissions and remains the largest in North America. Nearly a century of smelting operations resulted in the destruction of the local forests and other vegetation as a consequence of the high SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, and severe damage to many of the local lakes. After the lakes had exhausted their acid neutralizing capacities, acidification to pH's of approximately 4.0 and elevation of metal (Cu, Ni, Zn) concentrations to toxic levels resulted.

In the 1960's, studies began to document the extent of the damage. Beamish and Harvey (1972) showed that 70 of 150 lakes in the La Cloche Mountain area (approximately 50 to 100 kilometres south-west of Sudbury) had pH levels less than 5.5. These lakes had lost populations of lake trout and white sucker (Beamish 1974a; 1974b; Beamish et al.

1975). In addition, many lakes to the north-east of Sudbury were found to be equally acidic.

Pollution from a local source was also responsible for the acidification of the surrounding environment at Wawa, Ontario. In 1939, the Algoma Steel Corporation began open-pit iron ore mining and smelting operations in the area. With the discovery of high-quality underground deposits, mining activities expanded in 1949, 1954 and 1958, resulting in the abandonment of the open-pit mines in favour of the underground iron reserves. The SO<sub>2</sub> fumigations and associated acid precipitation resulted in acute toxic effects to the birch, spruce and pine forests within approximately 900 km<sup>2</sup>, as well as degradation of lake chemistry and losses of fish populations within 65 km<sup>2</sup>. Within a zone of 200 km<sup>2</sup>, deposition of acid has maintained lake pH levels between 3.0 to 4.0 for nearly 20 years (Somers and Harvey 1984).

These cases of environmental damage from acid emissions have all resulted from local point sources. It was not until the mid 1970's that acidification was also considered to be a regional problem resulting from the long-range transport of air pollutants.

In 1975, the Ontario government began a detailed study of lakes in Muskoka-Haliburton (a popular recreational area approximately 250 km north-east of Toronto) with the objective of determining the effects of cottage development on water quality. Researchers soon discovered that atmospheric loadings of acid were elevated in this area and that there was evidence of water quality effects including loss of alkalinity and lowering of pH in lakes located in the region (Dillon et al. 1978).

Continued research in Ontario and the other eastern Canadian provinces soon demonstrated that the Muskoka-Haliburton area in Ontario was not the only region affected by long-range transport of sulphur oxides. A large portion of eastern Canada is underlain by the Precambrian Shield which is characterized by granitic and siliceous bedrock of limited

acid neutralizing capacity. Areas in Canada considered sensitive to acid deposition based on underlying bedrock are shown in Figure 1.

Another important factor in determining the effect of acid deposition on a specific area is the area's location with respect to emission sources. Over most of north-eastern North America, the prevailing winds travel in a north-easterly direction and carry with them the pollutants generated in the midwestern American industrialized heartland. The wind pattern does vary to some extent with the season and there are often air flows to the south in the winter. As a result, pollutants generated in Canada can also be transported across the border to the United States. Still, the transboundary flux of pollutants from the United States to Canada exceeds the flux from Canada to the United States by a factor of approximately three or four (RMCC 1986), principally because of the fact that total United States emissions of both sulphur and nitrogen are much greater (RMCC 1986).

The extreme sensitivity of the Canadian aquatic environment has resulted in great concern within Canada about the environmental consequences of continued high loadings of strong acids and their precursors. The transboundary nature of the problem increases the complexity of solving the problem but does not make a resolution impossible to achieve.

A legal precedent regarding transboundary pollution was established by the Trail Smelter case in 1941. Sulphur dioxide emissions from a smelter constructed in Trail, British Columbia in the late 1890's resulted in extensive damage locally, as well as in areas across the border in the State of Washington. The initial dispute involved a private nuisance claim against a corporation in Canada by residents of the State of Washington. Although the dispute did not directly concern the two governments, they agreed to submit it to an Arbitral Tribunal established pursuant to an international convention. It was accepted that Canada would be responsible for any damage caused by the corporation and the United States was the proper claimant to represent

claims by its citizens. In April 1935, a preliminary agreement on compensation to the residents was reached and a final resolution on pollution control at the smelter was established in 1941. The Trail Smelter Arbitration (1941) established the following important international legal principle:

"... no State has the right to use or to permit the use of its territory in such a manner as to cause injury by fumes in or to the territory of another or the properties or persons therein when the case is of serious consequence and the injury is established by clear and convincing evidence."<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the international interpretation of this law, it has a special claim to recognition by judicial and administrative tribunals in the United States and Canada.

## 1.2 History of Negotiations on Transboundary Air Pollution with the United States

In 1976, the Canadian Network for Sampling Precipitation (CANSAP) began monitoring the acidity of rainfall. The results showed that in Canada, the deposition rate of strong acids was similar to that documented in Norway and Sweden (Summers and Whelpdale 1976). Simultaneously, research in southern Ontario (Dillon et al. 1978) showed that deposition of acid and sulphate greatly exceeded that provided by any local sources.

In 1978, in recognition of the transboundary nature of the problem, the Governments of the United States and Canada established a United States/Canada Bilateral Research Consultation Group to study the LRTAP

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<sup>1</sup> Am. J. of Int. Law, 1941.



phenomenon and to co-ordinate research between the two countries. Furthermore, in November of that same year, the United States sent Canada a diplomatic note requesting an informal discussion of a Congressional Resolution calling for a co-operative agreement with Canada on transboundary air pollution. The United States was concerned about the potential environmental impacts of a new coal-fired power plant at Atikokan in north-western Ontario on the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota.

In 1979, Canada and the United States issued a joint statement on transboundary air quality announcing the intention of both governments to develop a co-operative agreement on air quality. After continued discussions between the two countries, Canada and the United States signed a Memorandum of Intent in August of 1980 concerning transboundary air pollution. In this document, both countries declared their intention:

"to develop a bilateral agreement which will reflect and further the development of effective domestic control programs and other measures to combat transboundary air pollution"<sup>2</sup>

and

"to promote vigorous enforcement of existing laws and regulations as they require limitation of emissions from ... existing facilities in a way which is responsive to the problems of transboundary air pollution."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Canada/United States Memorandum of Intent, August 5, 1980.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

In addition, five working groups were established to provide the scientific basis of this agreement. While the working groups continued to meet and discuss the relevant scientific findings, several negotiating sessions were held between the two countries. At the February 25, 1982 negotiating meeting the Canadian federal Environment Minister announced that Canada was prepared to reduce its SO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50% east of the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border, contingent on a similar commitment by the United States. At the June 15, 1982 session, United States negotiators rejected Canada's proposal. As a result, the Canadian federal Environment Minister decided that future negotiations with the United States would be fruitless and broke off official negotiations.

However, the final work group reports were released in February of 1983 and subsequently reviewed. The United States peer review which was conducted by the National Academy of Sciences called for reductions in acid emissions and rejected the argument that more research was needed before control action could be taken. The Canadian peer review report was released by the Royal Society of Canada and concluded that the scientific evidence was sufficient to warrant prompt introduction of abatement measures.

With the failure of the MOI negotiations and the continued concern expressed by the Canadian government, President Reagan agreed to the appointment of special envoys by the two governments to review and assess the international environmental problems associated with the long range transport issue and to recommend actions to resolve them. The Joint Report of the Special Envoys on Acid Rain was released in January of 1986 prior to the second summit meeting between Prime Minister Mulroney and President Ronald Reagan. It called for the implementation of a five-year, five-billion-dollar control technology demonstration program by the United States government with joint funding between the government and private industry (Lewis and Davis 1986). In addition, it recommended that both countries review existing air pollution legislation to identify opportunities for addressing

transboundary environmental concerns and that they establish a bilateral advisory and consultative group on transboundary air pollution. Both countries accepted the Envoys' Report at the 1986 summit meeting.

Since that time, several meetings have been held by the Bilateral Advisory Group and the commitment to the Envoys' Report was reaffirmed at the 1987 Summit. However, the United States Administration continued to express its reluctance to take abatement action, insisting that more research is needed before emissions reductions can be mandated. In 1985, Canada announced its intention to reduce emissions by at least 50% east of the Manitoba/ Saskatchewan border by 1994 with the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba subsequently issuing regulations to major SO<sub>2</sub> emitters within their jurisdiction in order to fulfill their commitments. By 1988, comparable action had not been taken by the United States.

## 2.0 ATMOSPHERIC STUDIES

### 2.1 Emissions

#### 2.1.1 SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> Emissions Inventories

The compilation of up-to-date emissions inventories for acid-producing pollutants is necessary for several reasons. Historic and current databases allow us to determine if any emission trends are developing. Detailed and accurate emission inventories are needed for input to atmospheric transport models and for the development and implementation of successful control programs.

The 1980 emissions inventory for SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> from anthropogenic sources is currently the most complete for both Canada and the United States. Total SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Canada in 1980 were

estimated at 4.6 million tonnes (RMCC 1986). In eastern Canada, six large copper and nickel smelters (two in Manitoba, two in Ontario and two in Quebec) and one iron ore processing plant (in Ontario) together produced about 45% of the total (Figure 2). Electric utilities accounted for another 16.5% with substantial emissions in three provinces, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Regionally, the provinces east of the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border accounted for more than 80% of the Canadian total (RMCC 1986).

Total  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions in Canada in 1980 were 1.7 million tonnes (RMCC 1986). Mobile sources (cars, light-duty trucks, etc.) are the most significant source of  $\text{NO}_x$  in Canada, accounting for about two-thirds of the emissions in eastern Canada, with the remainder caused by power plants and other sources.  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions are more evenly distributed spatially than  $\text{SO}_2$  emissions, but the eastern part of the country is still the major source area at approximately 60% (RMCC 1986).

The national inventory also includes estimates of other species such as VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds), primary sulphates and particulates.

Work is nearing completion on the development of a complete emissions inventory for 1985 for both Canada and the United States.

Due to the shortage of actual measurements, there is a degree of uncertainty in the estimates of natural emissions of  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{NO}_x$ . In 1980, it was estimated that sulphur emissions from natural sources were approximately 0.5 million tonnes, principally from the biogenic activity of soils (RMCC 1986).



Estimates for NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from natural sources in Canada are currently not available. The United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimated the total annual natural NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in North America at 0.9 million tonnes (N), 0.3 million tonnes (N) as a result of lightning and 0.6 million tonnes (N) from soils (RMCC 1986).

#### 2.1.2 Trends in SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> Emissions

Canadian SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 1955 were approximately 4.6 million tonnes. They rose to a peak of 6.7 million tonnes between the mid-1960's and 1970, then decreased back to 4.6 million tonnes in 1980 (RMCC 1986). Eastern Canada continued to be the major contributor to these SO<sub>2</sub> emissions throughout this period. Subsequent to 1980, emissions have dropped in eastern Canada. SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in eastern Canada were approximately 3.2 million tonnes in 1984, down from 3.8 million tonnes in 1980 (RMCC 1986; Dillon et al. 1988; Figure 3).

During the same time period, Canadian NO<sub>x</sub> emissions have increased from 0.6 million tonnes in 1955 to 1.7 million tonnes in 1980. Unlike SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, Canadian NO<sub>x</sub> emissions have remained relatively constant since 1980 (RMCC 1986; Dillon et al. 1988; Figure 3).

With the recent announcements of regulations mandating SO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions by several of the eastern Canadian provinces, it is estimated that SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in eastern Canada (east of the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border) will be reduced by at least 50% by 1994 to 1.85 million tonnes. Furthermore, with the new motor vehicle standards for NO<sub>x</sub> effective in the fall of 1987 on 1988 model-year vehicles, NO<sub>x</sub> emissions are expected to level off in Canada.

## 2.2 Deposition Monitoring

### 2.2.1 Wet and Dry Deposition

Several federal and provincial networks have been established to monitor the concentration and deposition rates of chemical species in precipitation on both local and regional scales (Table 1). Short-term as well as long-term spatial and temporal variations in wet deposition are under study. A National Atmospheric Data Base (Natchem) is being implemented as a repository for the Canadian data.

Figure 4 shows the wet deposition patterns of sulphate across eastern North America from the combined results of Canadian and American monitoring networks. The southern portions of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec currently receive the highest deposition rates of strong acid in Canada with the Maritime provinces receiving higher deposition rates than the western provinces (where wet sulphate deposition is on average below  $10 \text{ kg ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ).

Several of the monitoring networks described in Table 1 originally attempted to collect dryfall as well, using both 'wet' and 'dry' buckets. However, an analysis of the results suggested that for sulphur and nitrogen compounds, the dryfall thus determined was not representative of dry deposition. At present, dry deposition is inferred from air concentration data which are measured at numerous sites cross Canada by both federal and provincial agencies. The dry deposition rate is then calculated by multiplying the air concentration by a deposition velocity which is determined for each substance taking into account information on local meteorology and surface characteristics.

In Canada, the APN (Air and Precipitation Monitoring Network) was set up specifically to obtain ambient air concentrations of selected S and N compounds and precipitation chemistry at rural sites. This network was expanded and became the Canadian Air and Precipitation Monitoring Network (CAPMoN). Results from the APN sites showed that ambient SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations decreased with increasing distance from the major sources. An analysis of four years of air and precipitation chemistry measurements (Summers et al. 1986) at six locations in eastern Canada indicated that dry deposition of sulphur accounted for 22% of the total sulphur deposition and dry deposition of nitrogen accounted for 21% of the total nitrogen deposition. On average, dry deposition accounted for about 40% of the total deposition at the southernmost stations, but less than 20% in remote areas.

Ontario's airborne particulate and SO<sub>2</sub> sampling network consists of more than 20 sites with low-volume sampling carried out over four-week intervals to determine ambient concentrations of various particulate and gaseous compounds, as well as daily measurements at four sites. In southern Ontario, the dry deposition is about one-half of the wet deposition rate whereas in central and northern Ontario it is about one-quarter to one-fifth of the wet deposition rate (Tang et al. 1986).

There are various additional special studies of atmospheric deposition in progress in Canada, including eddy correlation studies of dry deposition of SO<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>3</sub> to forest stands at Borden, Ontario (den Hartog et al. 1987) and of NO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> to agricultural crops and snow surfaces (Edwards and Ogram 1986, Ogram et al. 1988), instrument intercomparisons and evaluations at a number of sites, and the sampling of trace metals in air and precipitation at Muskoka in order to assess the impact of smelting activities in Sudbury.

### 2.2.2 Variability in Deposition Measurements

Deposition of sulphate and many other ions exhibits a strong seasonal cycle which is related to the seasonal nature of many meteorological and chemical processes. Studies by Tang et al. (1986) at Dorset, Ontario and Summers (1986) in the central and maritime Canadian regions show that maximum deposition of sulphate occurs during the summer months, and that nitrate shows minimal variation between winter and summer periods.

In North America, major precipitation episodes with high rates of wet deposition can account for a large fraction of the annual total deposition. A four-day event in 1981 in Muskoka, Ontario contributed 7 kg of wet sulphate (28%) to the annual total (Kurtz et al. 1984).

Over a long period of time (a year or more), it appears that, for many eastern Canadian locations, 20% of these storm events can contribute between 47 and 70% of the total wet and dry deposition of sulphate and nitrate (Barrie and Sirois 1986). For sulphate, the contribution by single events is higher for wet deposition than for dry, particularly at remote locations, whereas for nitrate, the reverse is true (Barrie and Sirois 1986).

The amount of atmospheric deposition varies from year to year due to several factors including changes in emission rates and meteorological variability making trend analyses very difficult.

However, Canadian agencies that have sufficient data available have conducted trend analyses.

Analysis of data from five rural sites in Nova Scotia between 1978 and 1984 (Underwood 1985) showed some temporal trends with



decreases in deposition of sulphate, nitrate and hydrogen ion over recent years.

In an analysis conducted by Dillon et al. (1988), the results of ten years of bulk deposition monitoring in the Muskoka-Haliburton area were reported. The recent decrease in SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in eastern North America was strongly correlated with a concomitant decrease in both bulk deposition rates and concentration of sulphate and hydrogen ions. Similar results were reported by Hedin et al. (1987) for the north-eastern United States. These long-term data records demonstrate the benefits of emissions controls.

Recent sampling of fogs and low clouds have also shown high concentrations of strong acid anions and extremely low pH's. Measurements made by aircraft in central Ontario show a strong tendency for the lowest pH to occur at the cloud base with pH values typically ranging from 3.0 to 5.0 (Summers et al. 1985). The associated sulphate and nitrate concentrations range from 10 to 50 mg per litre in polluted air masses. Extreme values of 60 mg per litre have been recorded in summer convective clouds in Ontario (Leaitch et al. 1986).

Recently, a network of mountain monitoring sites has been established (CHEF - Chemistry of High Elevation Fogs) as a forest project with similar sites in the United States to monitor air, fog and precipitation chemistry. Preliminary data from the Canadian sites indicate that fog (cloud on the mountain) water pH values (mean 3.7) near the summits are much lower than precipitation pH values (mean 4.3) at the same location (Schemenauer 1986; Schemenauer and Winston 1988).

## 2.3 Meteorological and Modelling Studies

### 2.3.1 Meteorological Studies

Numerous studies have been carried out related to acidic deposition and long-range transport. One example is an overview study on meteorological analyses of precipitation events in Ontario for the period 1976 to 1983 (Yap and Kurtz 1986) which indicated that for southern and central Ontario, precipitation events most commonly occur with pre-warm front and cyclonic weather situations, and air parcel trajectories from the south and south-west octants. Trajectories from these octants, which include the heavily industrialized regions of the Ohio Valley and south-western Ontario, also account for most of the wet deposition of sulphur and nitrogen.

This technique was used to assess the impact of a major reduction in SO<sub>2</sub> emissions on atmospheric deposition (Lusis et al. 1986). During the period from June 1982 to March 1983, the INCO and Falconbridge smelters at Sudbury, Ontario were shut down. The results of the analysis indicated that for receptors in a 400 km radius of the smelters, the smelter contribution to wet deposition of sulphate is expected to be less than 10 to 15% of the total deposition. For dry deposition of sulphate, the estimated contribution was greater, being about 20 to 30% of the total or less.

Continued collection of pertinent meteorological data is needed to provide support for the analysis of emission reduction effects on atmospheric deposition and for other special studies.

### 2.3.2 Development of Simple Models

Both the provinces of Ontario and Quebec as well as the federal Atmospheric Environment Service have been involved in the development of simple, linear atmospheric models where physical processes are represented by a small number of variables. These models can be used to evaluate various emission reduction scenarios by predicting the resultant changes in deposition patterns.

In Ontario, two simple long-range transport models have been developed, a statistical model and a Lagrangian or 'trajectory puff' model. The statistical model is used to compute long-term average deposition and air concentration of a chemical specie based on statistical analysis of meteorological variables collected over many years. The Lagrangian model simulates deposition on a monthly and seasonal time scale (Ellenton et al. 1985; Ellenton et al. 1988).

Both the statistical and Lagrangian models have been extensively evaluated, and used in the evaluation of control strategies. Results from modelling exercises have also been presented at various hearings and legal interventions in the United States.

These models have been used to evaluate the benefits of emission controls. As part of the Canadian commitment to reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50% by 1994, Ontario announced its control program in December of 1985. This program requires the province's four major producers of sulphur dioxide to reduce their emissions from the 1980 level of 1993 kilotonnes to a maximum of 665 kilotonnes of sulphur dioxide by 1994.

Ontario's statistical model was used to predict the environmental benefits of Ontario's control program. Deposition of wet

sulphate to the province's sensitive Muskoka region would be reduced from the 1980 base case level of 32 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> to 27.6 kg, a 14% reduction. The model also predicted significant decreases in deposition in neighbouring regions. For instance, deposition in the sensitive area of southern Quebec would decrease by 10%, in the Adirondacks by 8% and in New Hampshire by 7%.

Simple models have been criticized for numerous reasons, most frequently for their neglect of the non-linear aspects of atmospheric chemistry. Recently, however, these models have been subjected to extensive reviews which concluded that the simple trajectory models appear to simulate wet deposition of sulphur over at least a one-year time period with reasonable accuracy. On this time-scale, the non-linear effects of atmospheric sulphur chemistry are not critical (RMCC. 1986).

### 2.3.3 Eulerian Model Development

As a result of the numerous criticisms of the usefulness of simple models to predict source-receptor relationships for emission control strategy development, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Canadian federal government entered into a co-operative agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1983 for the development of an Eulerian model, the "Acid Deposition and Oxidants Model" (ADOM). This model will attempt to incorporate all relevant physical and chemical processes in as much detail as possible.

The Canadian Eulerian model is being developed under contract to ERT (Environmental Research and Technology) and includes three-dimensional transport and dispersion, cloud physics, gas and aqueous phase chemistry and detailed treatments of wet and dry scavenging (Venkatram and Misra 1988). As a result, this model will be applicable for episodic studies.



A working version of the model has been installed at the Canadian Meteorological Center (CMC) in Montreal. It has also been installed on the University of Toronto CRAY XMP computer where it is being used to investigate the non-linearity of sulphur chemistry in the atmosphere and the impact of Canadian and United States emission reductions.

Both the Canadian model and its American counterpart, 'RADM' (The Regional Atmospheric Deposition Model), are to be evaluated with monitoring data to be collected during an ambitious field study in Eastern North America during a two-year period starting in June 1988. The objective of this study is not only to determine if the models are predicting acidic deposition rates at the observed levels, but also to determine if they are making the right predictions for the right reasons (i.e. if the chemical and physical processes are correctly simulated).

Once evaluated, ADOM will be applied to investigate the importance of non-linearity in sulphur deposition and to determine the most effective means of controlling various pollutants, including sulphur, nitrogen and hydrocarbons.

### 3.0 TERRESTRIAL EFFECTS STUDIES

#### 3.1 Soil Studies

##### 3.1.1 Field Studies

The degradation of soils has been documented around major point sources of pollution such as the Sudbury and Wawa, Ontario areas (Whitby et al. 1976). The deposition of toxic metals can also affect the soil to the extent that no tree growth occurs (Linzon and Temple 1980). In addition, sulphur deposition can acidify

soils resulting in the loss of nutrients and the mobilization of aluminum and other toxic elements thereby limiting growth.

The possibility that continued acid deposition could deplete these nutrients and result in less productive forest sites has serious socio-economic consequences since forestry is a 10 billion dollar per year industry in Canada.

Soils common in Canada include luvisols, podzols and brunisols. Although podzols are naturally acidic through the action of carbonic and organic acids, the addition of dilute sulphuric and nitric acids can still result in appreciable effects on water draining these naturally acidic soils, including increased aluminum mobilization (Reuss and Johnson 1985). Acid deposition is more likely to affect soils directly that are less naturally acidic such as luvisols and brunisols.

### 3.1.2 Laboratory Studies

Field evidence gathered to date suggests that acid deposition can cause increased base cation leaching and Al solubilization (RMCC 1986). Several Canadian studies have been conducted using column-lysimeter leaching experiments to determine the effects of acid deposition on soils common to Canada.

Early experiments which used extremely high loadings of acid showed free movement of hydrogen ion through soils. However, more recent studies have shown that natural soils have considerable ability to buffer hydrogen ion additions. For example, Morrison (1981) observed that both podzol and brunisol soils consumed a considerable amount of hydrogen ion and that throughput of hydrogen ion took place only after soil bases had been substantially depleted. Other Canadian researchers (Hutchinson 1980; Rutherford 1985), using lysimeter studies, have demonstrated that bases are displaced by hydrogen ion, then

transported by sulphate and other anions once the soils are saturated with sulphate.

Additional column-lysimeter work has addressed the question of increased solubilization of aluminum with increased acidity. Aluminum seems to be readily mobilized to high concentrations when the pH of the leaching solution falls sufficiently. In an experiment using a hardwood soil from Ontario and coniferous horizons from Quebec, leaching was limited principally to the upper soil horizons and the solubilized Al was redeposited in the lower soil horizons (Rutherford et al. 1985).

Since it is difficult to determine the influence of acid deposition on soil chemical properties and processes in the field, these experiments allow for the isolation of changes in soil chemistry or processes in the laboratory for comparison with the results of field studies. The combined field and laboratory results should provide a good indication of what is actually occurring in natural soils.

## 3.2 Vegetation Studies

### 3.2.1 Lichens and Mosses as Bioindicators

Both laboratory and field studies have indicated that precipitation pH is an important factor in lichen and moss survival (Bailey and Larson 1982). Deposition of airborne pollutants to mosses and lichens in rural areas of Canada has been measured and compared with levels in remote areas (Zakshek and Puckett 1986). Sulphur and lead were the only elements with consistently higher levels in the lichen Cladina rangiferina in eastern Canada when compared with levels measured in the Northwest Territories. A comparison of measured sulphur levels in this lichen showed highest values in central Ontario and Quebec, with distinct east-west gradients.

Metal levels in lichens from approximately 50 locations across Canada were strongly influenced by their proximity to major sources of metal contaminated particulates. The sulphur levels of lichens, however, exhibited decreases in concentrations from south to north (Case 1985).

Furthermore, in an experiment subjecting a mature jack pine forest near Kirkland Lake, Ontario to twice monthly applications of acid rain ranging from 2.5 to 5.6 pH over a six year period, the dominant ground cover, the feather moss Pleurozium schreberi, showed significant decrease in percent cover, growth rate and biomass accumulation within two years of all pH treatments below pH 4.0 (Hutchinson and Scott 1986). Substantial decline also was evident in caribou lichens, Cladina spp over the five years of spray applications.

The loss of lichen and moss ground cover will result in exposure of tree roots and soil micro-organisms to drought and other stresses, directly influencing soil chemistry.

### 3.2.2 Laboratory/Greenhouse Studies

Numerous laboratory and greenhouse experiments have been conducted where different crop and tree species have been subjected to simulated acid rain treatments to determine injury symptoms and to establish visible injury thresholds.

Visible foliar injury is usually manifested by the formation of necrotic spots, pits or lesions on adaxial leaves. Eventually leaves can become deformed or reduced in area and their ability to photosynthesize can become inhibited. This type of injury has been documented in laboratory experiments only at pH of 3.0 or lower.



Greenhouse studies (Enyedi and Kuja 1986) showed that crops varied in their sensitivity to acid rain with visible injury occurring on the leaves, stems and flowers of all plants at treatments of pH 3.0. Plant response was also dependent on the total dose of acidity, as well as the characteristics (intensity, frequency and quantity) of the rain event.

Since foliar injury is not a reliable means of assessing actual effects on crop yield, Kuja et al. (1986) conducted a study to determine the effects of simulated acid rain on seed germination, seedling establishment and early stages of plant growth. Again, visible foliar injury was only observed at pH's between 3.0 and 2.6. Cultivar responses varied indicating that, for yield or growth effects, plant response is not only species-dependent but also strongly cultivar-dependent.

Abouguendia et al. (1986) conducted similar controlled growth experiments with six Saskatchewan forest and crop species and showed that simulated acid rain with pH 3.6 or higher had minimal effects on the crop and forest species studied.

Laboratory studies to determine the effects of simulated acid rain on tree growth have produced conflicting results. Visible injury is often considered the primary indication of dose response or impact. A review of the species studied to date shows that the upper pH limit for injury is about 3.0 for both conifers and deciduous species (RMCC 1986). With the annual average pH of rain in the forested areas of eastern Canada currently above 4.0, there is limited likelihood for direct foliar injury at this time. However, more research is needed in this area using field-grown material to ensure that these assumptions are correct and that there are no extenuating factors.

Atmospheric pollutants may, however, directly affect reproductive processes. Cox (1983) demonstrated that pollen is significantly affected by pH's below 5.6. Furthermore, the pH where a 50% probability of death occurred for all pollen tested was within the range of rainfall acidity in eastern Canada. These results show that the natural regeneration of Canadian forests is at risk.

Cox (1985) tested 11 Canadian forest flora species for the combined effects of copper, lead or zinc and pH on pollen function. The results indicated that, at current copper deposition levels, only the more sensitive species such as sugar maple and yellow birch experienced any effects on pollen germination or tube growth.

Another area of concern is the potential toxic effects of increased aluminum concentrations on tree roots. The possibility that aluminum toxicity is responsible for the dieback currently occurring in eastern North America cannot be ignored. Hutchinson et al. (1986), conducted a study to determine the relative sensitivity of five economically important eastern coniferous species to aluminum. The growth of red and white spruce was somewhat inhibited at 5 mg Al/l and severely inhibited at concentrations greater than 20 mg/l. The growth of the black spruce seedlings was also severely inhibited at concentrations between 20 mg and 150 mg Al/l. In contrast, growth of white pine was actually stimulated by concentrations between 5 and 20 mg Al/l. It was consistently more tolerant to aluminum toxicity than the other four species. Jack pine was intermediate in its response.

Laboratory studies have resulted in an increased understanding of many of the direct effects of acid rain but the importance of these effects still needs to be established for individual species and regions.

### 3.2.3 Exclusion Canopy Studies

At the Brampton Laboratory of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, an exclusion canopy system has been used to assess the impact of acid deposition and associated air pollutants on commercially-important crop and tree species (Kuja et al. 1986b).

The system was used to study the effects of simulated acid rain treatments on soybean (cv Hodgson) as measured by seed yield (kg/ha) or components of seed yield. The results did not show any significant yield reduction due to increased acidity of simulated acid rain (Kuja 1988). However, additional research is needed to assess the synergistic effects of acid rain and other pollutants, specifically ozone.

In 1987, a multi-year study was initiated to investigate the potential effects of simulated acid rain, ozone and soil nutrient status on sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and spruce seedlings grown on the rain exclusion canopy treatment plots.

The results from this experiment should provide insight into the possibility that acid rain is having a major detrimental effect on sugar maples in eastern Canada.

### 3.3 Forest Decline Studies

The central hypothesis in forest decline is that stress of either biotic or abiotic origin alters tree health and renders forests susceptible to further loss of vigor (Manion 1981). Disease organisms ultimately attack the weakened trees and result in their further demise (Houston 1981).

For several years, maple syrup producers in Quebec have been concerned by the apparent decline in the condition of an increasing number of

sugar bushes (Carrier 1986). Maple decline is not a new problem for the province. Lachance (1985), in his summary of historical maple decline in Quebec, documented a seasonal and localized decline in the maple bushes of Beauce County in 1934. This is the same area where the current decline was documented for the first time in 1978.

During the summer of 1982, several cases of sugar maple decline were reported in the province of Quebec. As a result, during the summers of 1983, 1984 and 1985, surveys were conducted in order to determine the scope and severity of the maple decline problem in the province. By 1985, surveys that covered a total area of 25,100 km<sup>2</sup> showed that close to 60 percent of the trees could be classified as 'healthy', or 'slightly affected', 35.4 percent as 'lightly affected', 4.2 percent as 'moderately affected' and 0.9 percent as 'heavily affected' (Carrier 1986). The decline symptoms varied but included earlier fall colouring of small leaves, branch dieback, bark loss from main branches, longer healing time for trunk tap holes, reduced radial increment growth and tree death. In addition, virtually all maple plots showed increased incidence of decline between 1983 and 1985. Average annual tree increment in maple forest association stands decreased between 1981 and 1985.

Results from a comparison of data from 129 sample plots established in the summers of 1983 and 1984 (Gagnon et al. 1985) showed that maple decline was most severe on the wettest (37%) or the driest sites (23%). Also, maple woods containing basswood had a lower severity of decline. Soils were analyzed from the various sites and their pH ranged from 4.0 to 4.7. The area of most severe sugar maple dieback coincided with the occurrence of high levels of nickel, chromium and cobalt in the soil and with magnesium-rich till. Soil potassium deficiencies were also noted in some areas of decline.

Gagnon et al. (1986) detected a decrease in several nutrients over a period of 15 years in soil compositions from 53 maple stands and Bernier et al. (1985) in a study of foliage of Appalachian maple stands



showed that average concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus were low and those of potassium and calcium were very low. Both the soil and foliar analyses indicate that the nutritional cycle of these maple stands has been disrupted and that these nutritional stress factors have been operating for several years. As a result, several researchers have been conducting fertilization experiments based on soil and foliar analyses for the identification of nutrient deficiencies.

Hypotheses postulated for the decline include insect infestations and climate changes but none of them could be identified as the universal causative factor. Recently, acid precipitation and air pollution have been suggested as the most likely causes since the affected region receives a high annual wet sulphate loading of  $40 \text{ kg ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ .

In Ontario, several maple syrup producers in the Muskoka area expressed concern in 1984 about the apparent increase in dieback and mortality of sugar maple trees in the previous six years. This area has received 30 to  $45 \text{ kg SO}_4 \text{ ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  over this time period (Dillon et al. 1988) and the lakes in the region are well-known to be affected adversely.

In 1984, permanent observation plots were established in seven maple woodlots in the Muskoka area and in one woodlot near Thunder Bay in north-western Ontario as a control plot. The 1984 results indicated that the current decline outbreak first began in 1978. Symptoms appeared throughout the Muskoka region with no consistent pattern apparent (McLaughlin et al. 1985). When the data from all seven plots were combined, 58% of the trees were considered healthy, 20% were experiencing light to moderate decline symptoms, and 22% were exhibiting severe decline symptoms. Decline symptoms appeared to be most pronounced on older trees and on tapped or wounded trees. Site nutrient deficiencies did not appear to be implicated in the sugar maple decline.

The soil at the Muskoka sites had a mean pH of 4.8, and had high concentrations of exchangeable aluminum, ranging from 6 mg to 40 mg per kg in mineral soil (McLaughlin et al. 1985). Declining trees suffered extensive root death with significantly higher aluminum concentrations in the fine roots. Foliar tissue leaching was apparent with reduced elemental concentrations in the tops of the tree crowns. Annual growth increments were very small in all trees during the forest tent caterpillar defoliations in 1976 and 1977; however, growth recovered in the healthy trees after the collapse of the epidemic but not in the declining trees. Furthermore, incremental growth in the declining trees appeared to be decreasing 20 years prior to the epidemic.

Although the prime factors for this decline probably include the severe insect infestations in 1976 and 1977, and the spring droughts in 1976, 1977 and 1983, acid precipitation is an additional environmental stress on the maple bushes in the Muskoka area (McLaughlin et al. 1985).

Forest declines are also occurring in the Maritime provinces. In 1985, in the course of general surveillance, unexplained white spruce decline was observed in northern New Brunswick (Canadian Forestry Service 1986). The condition involved areas of several hundred hectares in Restigouche County with the greatest decline apparent in mature trees but some effects also evident on other age-classes. In addition, red spruce deterioration was observed in the southern part of the province. Although spruce budworm infestations were responsible for defoliation in the past, they do not adequately explain the conditions observed. Both of these problems are being investigated further.

Since 1979, early leaf browning and premature leaf fall have been occurring annually in white birch in southern New Brunswick and occasionally in Nova Scotia in western Cumberland County along the Bay of Fundy (Canadian Forestry Service 1986). Although mainly a condition of white birch, similar symptoms were observed in 1980 and 1981 on other deciduous species. The condition appears to be limited to a coastal strip of 1-15 km in width which extends inland about 30 km,

mainly in low-lying areas. In 1985, detailed weekly observations were made in an attempt to determine the problem's cause. Although it was determined that several organisms were associated with this condition, none of them, alone or in combination, could satisfactorily explain the situation. This area is frequently subjected to acid fog episodes and intensive monitoring of air pollutants in coastal fog is now in progress.

Currently, the relative importance of acid deposition and air pollution stress in relation to other stresses such as diseases, insects, weather extremes and climate, still needs to be clarified for the major eastern Canadian declines. However, it is likely that the added stress of air pollution has increased the trees' susceptibility to other stresses.

### 3.4 Wildlife Effects

#### 3.4.1 Amphibians

A number of field and laboratory studies have been undertaken to assess the actual and potential effects of acid deposition on amphibian distribution and abundance.

Surveys of amphibian breeding habitats in Canada in areas unaffected by local sources have shown that many of these habitats are very acidic (Pough 1976; Dale et al. 1985; Gascon and Planas 1986).

Poor reproductive success has been documented as resulting in smaller populations in very acidic environments. Increased embryonic mortality at low pH (pH <5.0) has been measured in both natural populations and in situ bioassays (Saber and Dunson 1978; Clark and Hall 1985; Clark 1986; Freda and Dunson 1986). Elevated aluminum concentrations in acidic natural waters are also toxic and can further reduce embryonic survival (Clark and LaZerte 1985; Clark and Hall 1985; Glooschenko et al. 1985).

Even though amphibian larvae are more acid-tolerant than embryos they are more vulnerable to indirect effects of acidification due to potentially limited food resources. Because they are feeding very actively during the larval stage, food resources and competitive relationships are very important.

The food resource for the larval stage consists of benthic invertebrates and plankton whose community structure and species composition can be altered at pH <5.6 (Mierle et al. 1986).

#### 3.4.2 Waterfowl

Because of their dependence on the aquatic environment for nest sites, brood protection and food, the loss or degradation of this environment by acidification could have serious implications for the future of the waterfowl resource in eastern Canada. The severity of such effects will depend on the sensitivity of the nesting habitats.

McNicol et al. (1985) conducted comparisons of waterfowl breeding success in central and northern Ontario and showed that productivity was significantly lower in the headwater lakes receiving deposition greater than 30 kg of  $\text{SO}_4$   $\text{ha}^{-1}$   $\text{yr}^{-1}$ . Also, breeding success rates were affected by the abundance of fish stocks and the fish community structure.

The diets of some fish and ducks overlap in simple headwater lake systems. With the critical life-stage for food availability being the early brood development period, survival can also be affected by competition with fish for available aquatic insect prey, especially since the community and population structure of benthic invertebrates can be altered at pH <5.6 (Mierle et al. 1986).



#### 4.0 AQUATIC/CATCHMENT STUDIES

The effects of acidic deposition on aquatic systems in Canada have been described and reviewed in detail in three major reports: Harvey et al. (1981), Environment Canada (1983) and RMCC (1986). In addition, Canadian information has been included in reviews prepared by American agencies including National Academy of Sciences (1986), Environmental Protection Agency (1985), and Cook (1988) and in technical review articles (e.g. Dillon 1983; Dillon et al. 1984; Haines 1981). The information presented in these reports is not repeated here; instead, a summary is provided highlighting more recent findings.

#### 4.1 Chemical Studies

##### 4.1.1 Surveys - Extent of Sensitivity/Damage

There are an estimated 700,000 lakes in Canada below 52°N east of the Ontario-Manitoba border, which corresponds approximately to the zone where  $\text{SO}_4$  deposition is greater than approximately 1 g (wet)  $\text{SO}_4 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  (Kelso et al. 1986).

Based on chemical surveys done in each province, Minns & Kelso (1986) and Kelso et al. (1986) estimated that 50% of these lakes had alkalinity  $< 50 \mu\text{eq L}^{-1}$ , a level that indicates sensitivity to acid deposition.

Furthermore, an estimated 20% (~150,000) lakes had  $\text{pH} \leq 6.0$ , indicating that biological effects may have occurred, while ~14,000 lakes were estimated to have  $\text{pH} < 4.7$ , a level at which biological effects are expected to be very severe (Mills and Schindler 1986; Mierle et al. 1986). Although the proportion of these lakes with  $\text{pH} < 6.0$  that are dystrophic (high concentrations of dissolved organic acids) is not known, it is highly unlikely that the low pH's can be explained by this factor (see below),

except possibly for the Maritime provinces. Minns and Kelso also predicted, based on a simple model derived from the Henriksen (1979, 1982) and Wright (1983) relationships, that ~9% of these 700,000 lakes would ultimately have pH <5.0 if 'current' (1980) SO<sub>4</sub> deposition remained constant. However, the model is not validated, nor is the 'constant deposition' assumption valid; SO<sub>4</sub> deposition has dropped in at least part of eastern Canada since 1980 (see Section 4.2.2 and Dillon et al. 1988).

The sensitivity and extent of effects on lakes in eastern Canada has also been assessed on a regional basis by Jeffries et al. (1988) and Neary and Dillon (1988). Both of these studies showed that not only was the extent of affected lakes great in eastern Canada and Ontario, respectively, but that organic acids did not play a significant part in the distributions of lake pH or alkalinity. For example, the highest organic acid levels in Ontario were found in the zone containing the lakes with the highest average pH's and alkalinities where S deposition was lowest (Fig. 5). In fact, in Ontario at least, there are no known lakes in zones where S deposition is <0.5 g/m<sup>2</sup>/yr that have high DOC and pH <6.0.

Both the Ontario and the eastern Canadian surveys also demonstrated that the pattern of SO<sub>4</sub> concentration in lakes followed the S deposition pattern, a result consistent with the findings of the survey of lakes in the eastern USA (Landers et al. 1988). Neary and Dillon (1988) also found that, in Ontario, there was a strong relationship between both lake alkalinities and pH's and S deposition, provided that only the lakes with conductivity <50 µS were considered. These data provided a strong indication of both widespread reductions in alkalinity and pH and a cause-effect relationship with S deposition.

There are relatively few data available to assess the effects on groundwaters in Canada. Azzaria et al. (1982) reported that in

the Lac Laflamme (Quebec) catchment, shallow groundwater in zones of rapid infiltration had pH <4.5, while Craig et al. (1986) and Johnston et al. (1985) and Bottomly et al. (1984) found that shallow groundwater in the Turkey Lakes watershed (Ontario) demonstrated pH decreases (from ~5.2 to 4.6) in response to precipitation events.

#### 4.1.2 Trends in Lakes and Streams

In Canada, as elsewhere, there is a paucity of historical water quality data useful for determining both the extent and rate of acidification of surface waters. As mentioned earlier, until the late 1970's acid deposition was considered to be a local (e.g. Sudbury, Wawa, Trail) rather than a regional problem with effects apparent only in areas adjacent to major SO<sub>2</sub> sources. With very few exceptions, detailed monitoring programmes designed to measure directly acidification rates and to monitor chemical trends were not established until the 1980's. As a result, assessment of the chemical trends in acidification has relied largely on indirect evidence, e.g. paleolimnological relationships, geochemical relationships, or comparison of old and new data collected a number of years apart. The latter approach is usually compromised by changes in analytical methods.

The only reported examples of direct continuous measurement of lakes in high S deposition zones are Plastic and Harp Lakes in Ontario (Dillon et al. 1987). Plastic Lake's alkalinity declined by  $2.1 \pm 0.4 \mu\text{eq L}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  between 1979 and 1985, while its pH dropped  $0.035 \pm 0.007$  units  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  (Fig. 6); Harp Lake, on the other hand demonstrated no significant change in either pH or alkalinity. The difference between these lakes was attributed to the fact that the Plastic Lake catchment is covered by very thin (<1 m) sandy basal till with many exposed bedrock (orthogneiss) ridges, while the Harp Lake catchment is covered by a generally

thicker overburden of glacial till >1 m deep on ~50% of the catchment and ~10 m thick in the valley bottoms. Thus, Plastic Lake was typified as a 'sensitive' lake while Harp Lake was considered to be relatively insensitive.

The loss of alkalinity in Plastic Lake was offset by a decrease in base cations, principally Ca, Na and K, but not an increase in strong acid anions ( $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ ,  $\text{NO}_3^-$ ), indicating that depletion of available cations may have occurred in the catchment. The situation was complicated by the fact that over the period of study S deposition was decreasing. Unlike Plastic Lake, the Harp Lake  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$  concentration decreased as a result of the declining S deposition.

Other sites with long term records, especially Rawson Lake and other ELA lakes (Schindler 1988) exist, but these are situated in a region where S deposition is low, and changes in lake chemistry are not expected.

Although a number of paleolimnological studies based on either diatom or chrysophyte -pH relationships have been conducted in areas where local sources have acidified lakes (e.g. Dickman 1985; Dixit 1986), there is little information yet available for any sensitive lakes in the rest of eastern Canada. The PIRLA project (Charles et al. 1986) includes three lakes in Algonquin Park, Ontario, but none have pH <6.0. Griffiths et al. (1988) have produced a calibration for Ontario lakes based on a large sample size (~60 lakes), and work is in progress to test this on a number of lakes including Plastic Lake.



## 4.2 Catchment Studies

Much of the acid rain research in Canada has concentrated on the effects of acid deposition on whole catchments, i.e. on both the aquatic and terrestrial portions of catchments. A summary of the major catchment studies currently in progress in eastern Canada is given in Table 3; their locations are shown in Figure 7.

In each of these studies, hydrologic and elemental fluxes are measured in one or more catchments and lakes. These catchment studies also include soil and vegetation measurements and some tree condition and regeneration studies.

The sensitivity of the sites varies. The Experimental Lakes Area in northwestern Ontario has shallow podzolic basal tills with extensive bedrock exposure on hillcrests, but deep soils in low areas. Some of these sites are of moderate sensitivity to acidification, while others are very sensitive.

The Turkey Lakes basin is located on the Precambrian Shield but is only moderately sensitive since the till is of variable thickness and contains a small amount of calcium carbonate (1 to 2%).

The catchments being studied by the Dorset Research Centre are located on the Precambrian Shield with overburden consisting mostly of thin till and rock ridges. The soils at Plastic Lake watershed are generally thin, acidic, weakly developed podzols. Most of these catchments are extremely sensitive as a result.

The Lac Laflamme catchment, within the Montmorency Experimental Forest, also lies on the Precambrian Shield and is extremely sensitive as well.

The poorly buffered oligotrophic watersheds combined with the low bicarbonate buffering capacity of the lakewaters also make the Kejimikujik catchments extremely sensitive to acidification.

These whole catchment studies provide valuable data on the interaction between terrestrial and aquatic systems.

#### 4.3 Biological Effects

Most of the early concern relating to biological effects focussed on fish, particularly sports fisheries. The decline of the Atlantic salmon fishery in a number of Nova Scotia rivers with low pH is well-documented (Watt et al. 1983) and supported by laboratory (Peterson 1984) and field (Lacroix 1985) studies. Adverse effects on several fish populations in Ontario were documented by Harvey (1982), while Beggs and Gunn (1986) showed regional effects on lake trout and brook trout populations in Ontario.

More recently, evidence has accumulated from both field and laboratory studies that other organisms lower in the food web (including cyprinids, molluscs, crustaceans) are affected at higher pH's than many of the sports fish species (Schindler et al. 1985; Mills and Schindler 1986; Holtze et al. 1988). Because these lower trophic level organisms are usually the major food resource of the 'sports' fish, their disappearance or reduction in abundance at higher pH's may have a major effect on the fish populations. In other words, the principal effects on fish are more likely to be indirect rather than acute toxicological response to pH (or aluminum).

Much of the information relating to the biological effects of acidic deposition in Canada is derived from the experimentally acidified lakes (L.223, L.302) in the Experimental Lakes Area (Schindler et al. 1985; see Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Res., 37, March, 1980 and Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Res., 44, Supplement 1, 1987).

Acidification of L.223 from pH 6.8 to 5.0 over an 8-yr period resulted in changes to many components of the food web (Table 2; Mills and Schindler 1986). Diversity of most algae, zooplankton, benthos and fish declined, while some species were lost and others appeared for the first time. Significant changes began at a pH just below 6.0, e.g. decline in Mysis relicta (Nero and Schindler 1983), and decline in fathead minnow populations. The appearance of filamentous algae (*Mougeotia* spp.) occurred at pH of 5.6, consistent with the observations of Jackson (1985) who surveyed 40 lakes in Ontario. Lake trout recruitment failure at pH ~5.6 and white sucker recruitment failure at 5.0 were consistent with results of laboratory studies (N. J. Hutchinson et al. 1988). Recruitment failure of the crayfish Orconectes virilis in L.223 at pH ~5.6 was similar to the results of laboratory and field toxicity tests (Berrill et al. 1985) with two other species of *Orconectes*.

As Plastic Lake has acidified (Dillon et al. 1987), a variety of biological effects have been observed and attributed to its declining pH. Harvey and Lee (1982) observed a dead and dying pumpkinseed sunfish population in the littoral zone of the lake each spring. Stephenson and Mackie (1986) found a depauperate population of Hyaella azteca, a common and normally very abundant amphipod, in Plastic Lake in 1983. In the following year no recruitment was observed, and the population subsequently disappeared. The population of a common and usually abundant snail, Amnicola limnosa, had reduced growth rate and abundance in 1980 (Rooke and Mackie 1984, 1984a and 1984b), and is probably now extinct. Many other effects common to acidic lakes have been observed (blooms of filamentous algae, reduced zooplankton richness, loss of zooplankton species, loss of crayfish), but as yet they are unpublished.

There are very few data available allowing assessment of the effects of acidic deposition on stream biota. Hall and Ide (1987) showed that several mayfly and stonefly species disappeared between 1937-42 and 1984-85 from several streams in Algonquin Park, Ontario that

demonstrated pH decreases of >1 unit during snowmelt. Neighbouring streams that showed no pH decline had not lost the same benthic invertebrate species.

Although only a few case studies provide direct documentation of biological effects in Canada, the results of these few studies are consistent with both laboratory toxicology studies and with the whole-ecosystem experiments at the Experimental Lakes Area.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Acid rain research conducted by Canadian federal and provincial agencies since the late 1970's have contributed immensely to our overall understanding of the acid rain problem.

Atmospheric studies have shown that the southern portions of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec receive the highest deposition rates of strong acid, that there are seasonal and episodic trends to sulphate deposition, that fogs and low clouds have high concentrations of strong acid anions and extremely low pH's, and that atmospheric models can be used to simulate deposition.

The terrestrial studies have shown that acid deposition can affect tree growth and regeneration by a combination of factors including loss of nutrients, Al toxicity and direct effects on reproductive processes. The added stress of air pollution can increase the trees' susceptibility to other stresses (insects, disease, weather).

The aquatic studies have documented the acidification of a sensitive lake (Plastic Lake in Ontario) and observed a variety of biological effects as a result of the declining pH. Surveys in Ontario and other parts of eastern Canada have demonstrated that the pattern of  $\text{SO}_4$  concentration in lakes follows the S deposition pattern. There is widespread reduction in alkalinity and pH as a result of S deposition.



These data continue to support the Canadian federal/provincial decision which has resulted in regulations to reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50% by 1994.

# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

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Table 1. Federal and Provincial Deposition Monitoring Networks in Canada.

Network	Period of Operation, Number and Location of Sites	No. of Sites (1986)	Sampling Period	Parameters Measured
Canadian Network for Sampling Precipitation (CANSAP)	Began in 1977 with 45 sites across Canada. Operation ended in January 1986. Network replaced by CAPMon.	0	Monthly samples collected on last day of month.	pH, conductivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, K, Na, Ca, Mg.
Canadian Air and Precipi- tation Monitoring Network (APN)	Begain in November 1978 with 5 sites. 4 sites became part of CAPMoN.	1	Daily samples.	pH, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, K, Na, Ca, Mg, total phosphorus.
Canadian Air and Precipi- tation Monitoring Network (CAPMoN)	Mid-1983 to present. Sites across Canada.	21	Daily precipitation samples. (8 locations also monitor air quality.)	pH, conductivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, K, Na, Ca, Mg, alkalinity, acidity.
British Columbia Provincial Precipitation Monitoring Network	Began operation in 1983 with 7 stations.	12	Weekly samples.	pH, total acidity, total alkalinity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, NH <sub>4</sub> , Na, K, Ca and Mg.
Alberta Precipitation Quality Monitoring Network	April 1978 - present.	10	Monthly samples.	pH, acidity/alkalinity, conductivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, PO <sub>4</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Na, K, Ca and Mg.
Summer Rain Sampling Network in Northern Saskatchewan	1983 - present.	7	Daily samples. (May 15 to October 15.)	pH, acidity, alkalinity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, NH <sub>4</sub> , K, Ca, Na, Mg, metal ions (2 samples/station/ season).
Manitoba Network for Precipitation Collection	1980 (2 stations) - present.	6	Daily samples.	pH, conductivity, acidity SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, Ca, NH <sub>4</sub> , Mg, Na and K

Table 1. Federal and Provincial Deposition Monitoring Networks in Canada.  
(Cont'd)

Network	Period of Operation, Number and Location of Sites	No. of Sites (1986)	Sampling Period	Parameters Measured
Acidic Precipitation in Ontario Study (APIOS) Cumulative Network	September 1980 (monthly samples) - present.	37	28-day samples as of January, 1982.	pH, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, K, Na, Ca, Mg, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, total phosphorus, trace metals.
Acidic Precipitation in Ontario Study (APIOS) Daily Network	September 1980 - present.	16	Daily samples.	pH, conductivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, Na, Ca, Mg, acidity.
Acidic Precipitation in Ontario Study (APIOS) Cumulative Air Network	November 1981 - present	25	28-day cumulative samples.	Particulate SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , K, Na, Ca, Mg and trace metals. Gaseous HNO <sub>3</sub> and SO <sub>2</sub> .
Acidic Precipitation in Ontario Study (APIOS) Daily Air Network	July 1980 - present.	4	Daily samples.	Particulate SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> and NO <sub>4</sub> , K, Na, Ca, Mg. Gaseous SO <sub>2</sub> and HNO <sub>3</sub> .
Réseau d'échantillonnage des précipitations du Québec	June 1981 - present.	42	Weekly samples.	pH, Ca, Mg, Na, K, NH <sub>4</sub> , SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, HCO <sub>3</sub> , F.
New Brunswick Precipitation Monitoring Network	1980 - present	7	Monthly samples to October 1986. Weekly since then.	pH, acidity, alkalinity, conductivity, various cations, anions and metals.
Nova Scotia Precipitation Monitoring Network	1978 - present.	5	Weekly samples.	pH, acidity, alkalinity, conductivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , NH <sub>4</sub> , Cl, K, Na, Ca, Mg an some heavy metals.
Newfoundland Environment Acid Precipitation Network	1980 - present	7	Weekly samples. (3 sites co-located with Environ- ment Canada.	pH, alkalinity, conduct- tivity, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , Cl, NH <sub>4</sub> , Na, Ca, Mg and K.

Table 2. pH thresholds of biotic changes for selected Lake 223 organisms. (Modified from Mills and Schindler 1986)

Biota	Lake 223 pH
<u>Mysis relicta</u> abundance decline	5.93
Fathead minnow abundance decline	5.93
<u>Mougeotia</u> mats appear	5.64
<u>Asterionella ralfsii</u> appears	5.64
<u>Orconectes virilis</u> abundance declines	5.59
Lake trout recruitment ceases	5.59
White sucker recruitment ceases	5.02
Pearl dace abundance declines	5.09
Leeches become rare	5.09
Mayfly <u>Hexagenia</u> disappears	5.13

Table 3. Canadian Catchment Studies

Location	S Deposition ( $\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ )	Duration of Studies	Monitoring Sites	References
Experimental Lakes Area (Ontario)	14 <sup>a</sup>	1969-Present	5 lakes (control lakes for acidification experiments)	Schindler 1987, 1988
Turkey Lakes Watershed Study (Ontario)	54.8 <sup>b</sup>	1981-Present	4 lakes, 26 streams	Jeffries et al. 1986 Semkin and Jeffries 1986
Muskoka-Haliburton (Ontario)	50-90 <sup>b,c</sup>	1976-Present	8 lakes, 24 streams	Dillon et al. 1982 LaZerte and Dillon 1984 Seip et al. 1985 Dillon et al. 1987
Lac Laflamme Calibrated Catchment (Quebec)	46 <sup>a</sup>	1980-Present	Lac Laflamme and 3 nearby lakes	Jones, H.G. and C. Deblois 1987
Kejimikujik (Nova Scotia)	34 <sup>a</sup>	1978-Present	3 lakes	Kerekes and Freedman 1986; Kerekes et al. 1982

a) wet only

b) total

c) range from 1976 to 1986



## FIGURES

- Fig. 1. Acid rain: A national sensitivity assessment - a national evaluation of surface water resources at risk based on the potential of soils and bedrock to reduce acidity. (Source: Environmental Fact Sheet 88-1, Inland Waters and Lands Directorate).
- Fig. 2. Anthropogenic emissions of  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{NO}_x$  in Canada in 1980. (Source: RMCC: Atmospheric Sciences, Aug. 1986).
- Fig. 3.  $\text{SO}_2$  emissions on (a) eastern Canada, and (b) the eastern United States, and  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions in (c) eastern Canada, and (d) the eastern United States. (Modified from Dillon et al. 1987).
- Fig. 4. Annual sulphate deposition ( $\text{Kg h}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ) in eastern North America for the years 1981, 1982, and 1983. (Source: Summers et al. 1986).
- Fig. 5. Relative importance of  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ , organic anions ( $\text{A}^-$ ), and  $\text{HCO}_3^-$  ( $+\text{CO}_3^{2-}$ ) in lakes in Ontario with conductivity  $< 50 \mu\text{S}$  in six S deposition zones:
- Zone 1,  $< 0.25 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ;
  - Zone 2,  $0.25\text{--}0.50 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ;
  - Zone 3,  $0.50\text{--}0.75 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ;
  - Zone 4,  $0.75\text{--}1.0 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ;
  - Zone 5,  $1.0\text{--}1.25 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ;
  - Zone 7,  $> 1.25 \text{ gS m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ .
- Fig. 6. Annual alkalinity in the (a) ice-free, and (b) ice-covered season, and (c) pH in Plastic Lake, 1979-85.
- Fig. 7. Location of Canadian catchment studies.

# THE POTENTIAL OF SOILS AND BEDROCK TO REDUCE THE ACIDITY OF ATMOSPHERIC DEPOSITION IN CANADA

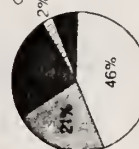
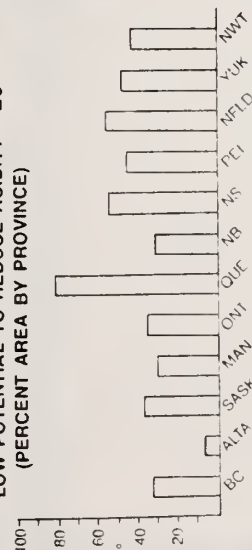
## LEGEND

- LOW: Areas primarily comprised of non-carbonate bedrock and coarse textured shallow soils
- MODERATE: Areas primarily comprised of non-carbonate bedrock and/or shallow to deep soils
- HIGH: Areas primarily comprised of carbonate bedrock and/or deep, line textured soils
- UNRATED: Dominated by peatlands
- UNRATED: Dominated by permanent ice and snow fields
- Wet Sulphate Deposition (1980) in kg/ha yr

A generalized interpretation of terrestrial systems' capacities to decrease the acidity of depositions before reaching surface waters.



LOW POTENTIAL TO REDUCE ACIDITY  
(PERCENT AREA BY PROVINCE)



NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
BY CLASS

Fig. 1

# CANADIAN 1980 EMISSIONS OF SULPHUR DIOXIDE

$10^3$  TONNES

NON-FERROUS 2070  
44.9%

TRANSPORTATION 135  
2.9%

RES\COMM\IND  
FUEL COMBUSTION 625  
13.6%

THERMAL POWER GENERATION 760  
16.5%

OTHER INDUSTRIAL  
PROCESSES 1020  
22.1%

# CANADIAN 1980 EMISSIONS OF NITROGEN OXIDE

$10^3$  TONNES

TRANSPORTATION 1075  
61.8%

OTHER INDUSTRIAL  
PROCESSES 70  
4%

THERMAL POWER GENERATION 260  
14.9%

RES\COMM\IND FUEL COMBUSTION 335  
19.3%

Fig. 2



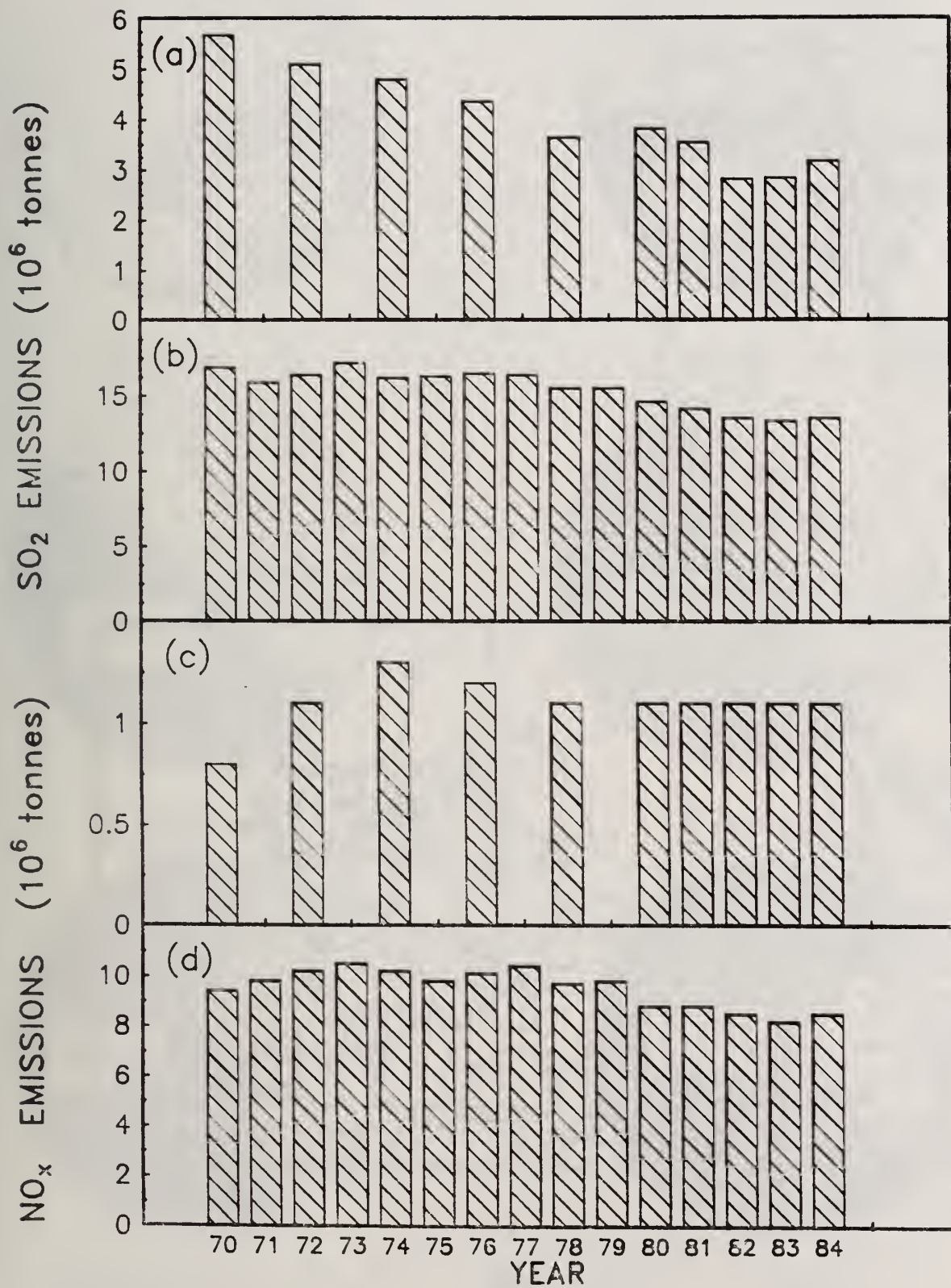


Fig. 3

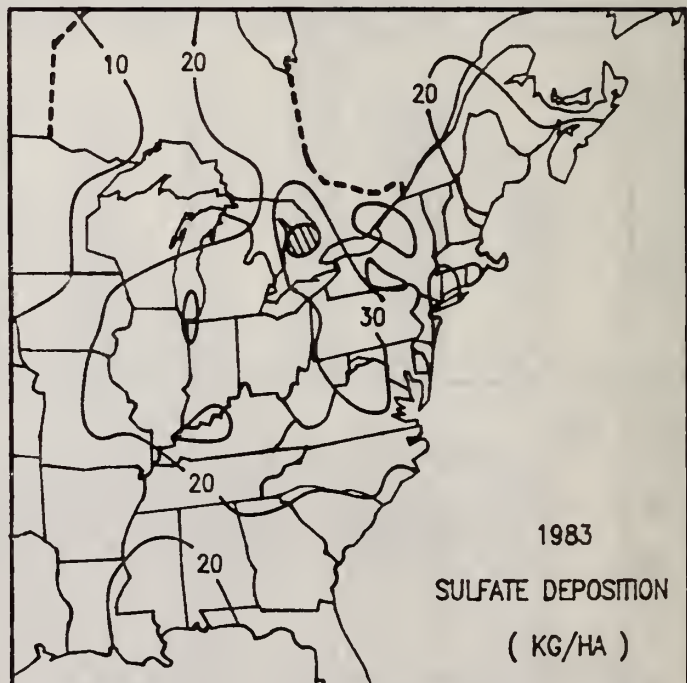
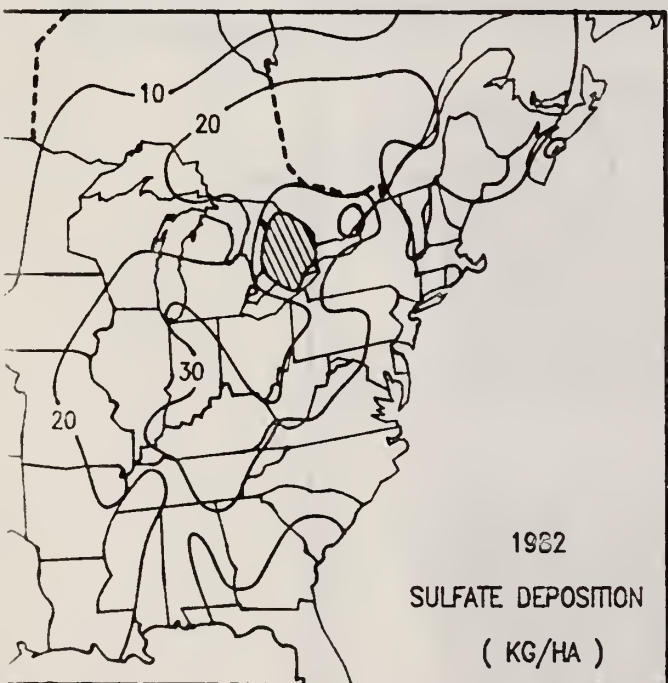
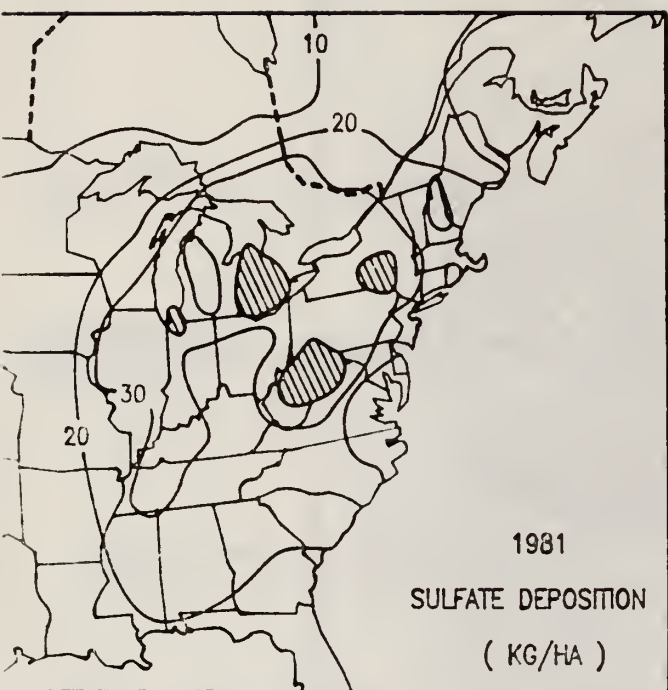
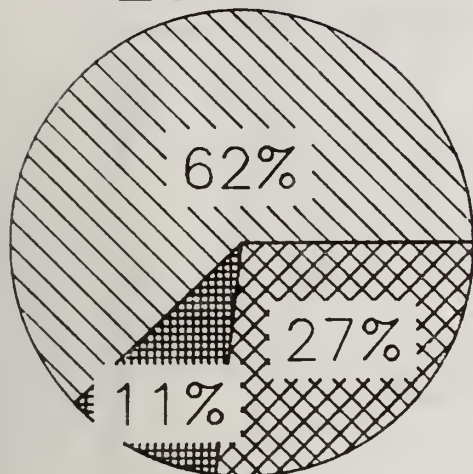


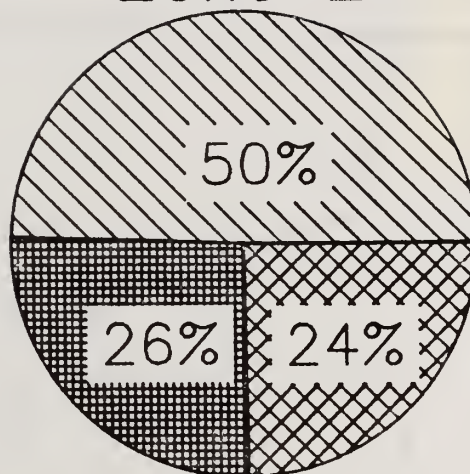
Fig. 4



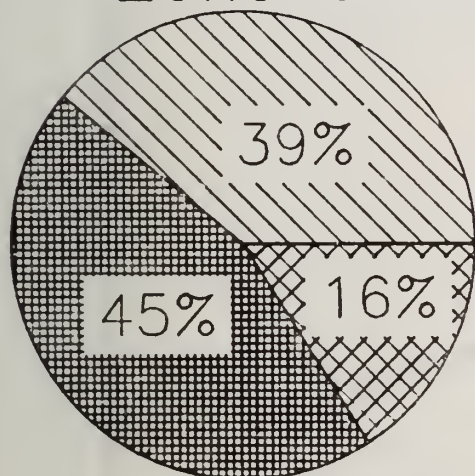
Zone 1



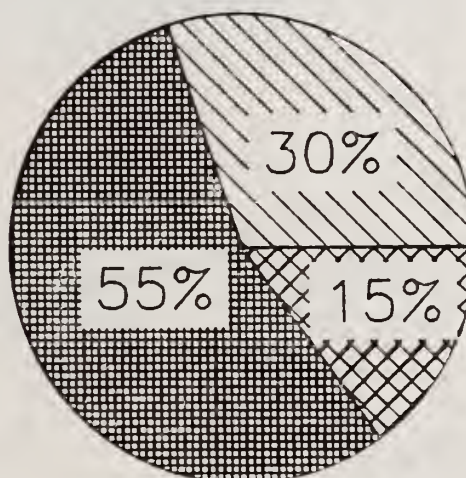
Zone 2



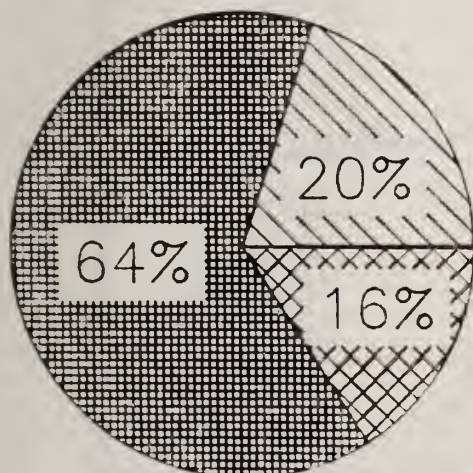
Zone 3



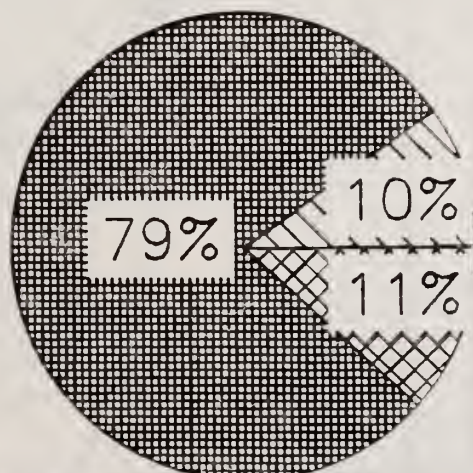
Zone 4




Zone 5



Zone 7



  $\text{HCO}_3^- + \text{CO}_3^{2-}$

  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$


  $\text{A}^-$

Fig. 5

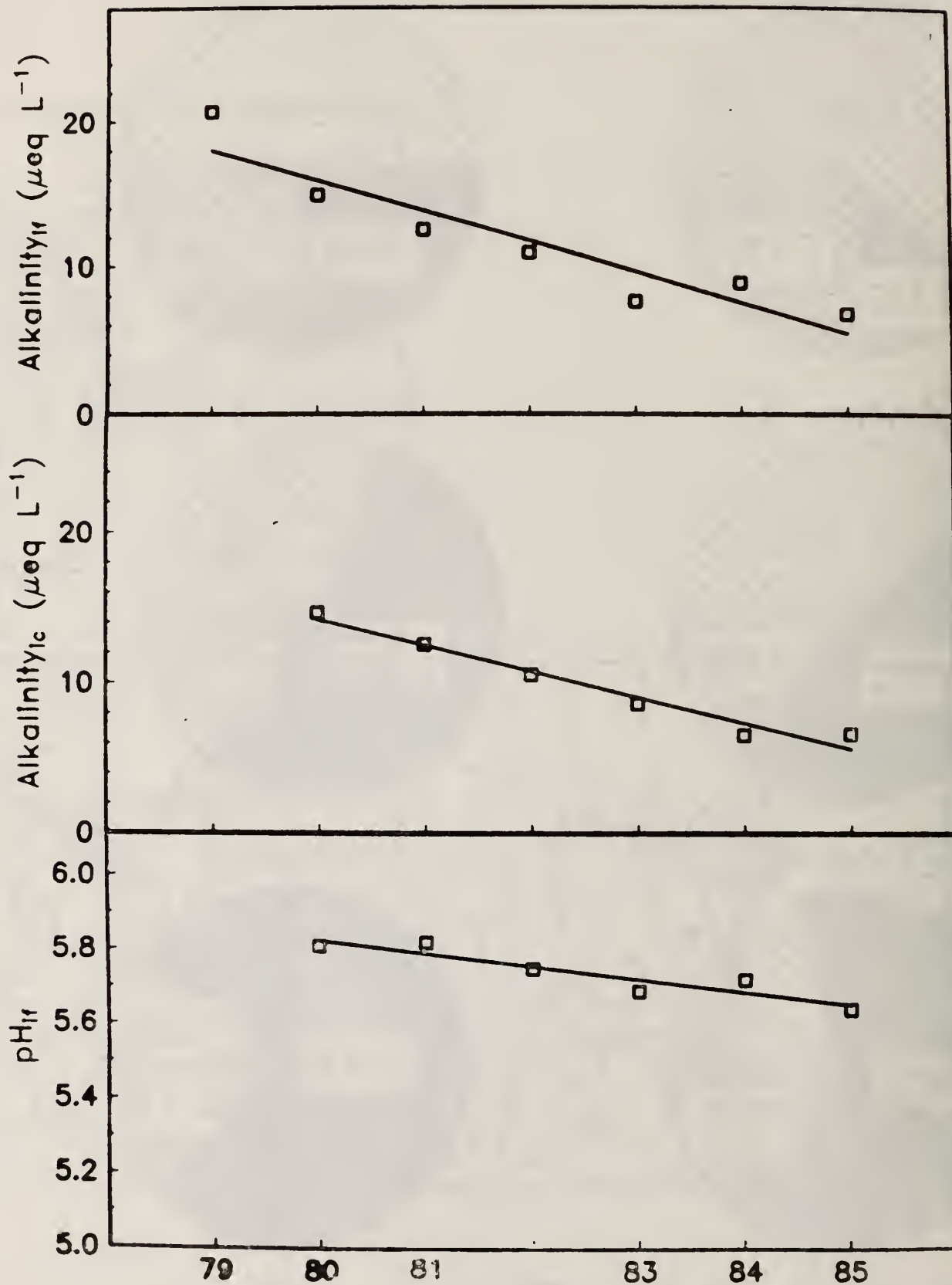


Fig. 6

Location of Sites

1. Kejimikujik, NS.
2. Lac Laflamme, Que.
3. Dorset, Ont.
4. Turkey Lakes, Ont.
5. Experimental Lakes Area, Ont.

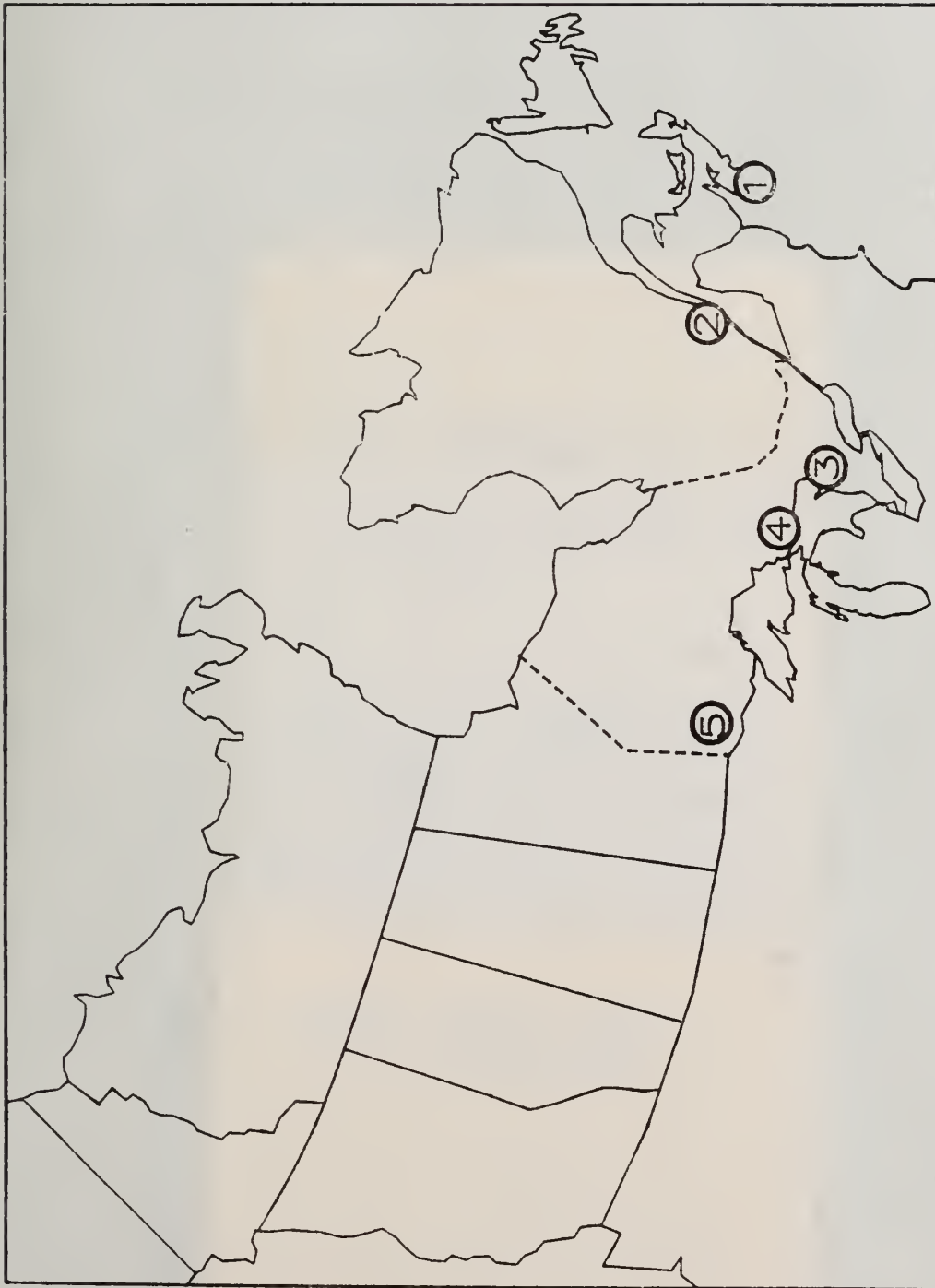


Fig. 7



	DATE DUE	
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QH	Keith, J.C. & P.J. Dillon
545	Acid precipitation research
A17	in Canada.
K45	
MOE	1989

DATE	ISSUED TO
OCT 16 1989	J. GEMMLER - TR. ORG ✓
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